

Message Text

MRN: 1974TUNIS 004199 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000001 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX
FILE; TELEGRAM TEXT FOR THIS SEGMENT IS UNAVAILABLE
ADP000
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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 IO-14 TRSE-00 OMB-01 XMB-07 EB-11

SCCT-02 DRC-01 SAB-01 /183 W
----- 124359

R 021415Z JUL 74
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6070
INFO USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMOMBASSY ROME 726
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 4199

8. I REMARKED IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT FATAH, WHICH
HAD EARLIER SEEMED TO BE TAKING MORE MODERATE POSITIONS,
HAD NOW CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE NAHARIYA INCIDENT. CHATTI
SAID THIS HAD COME ABOUT BECAUSE FATAH SAW THAT AS IT
BECAME MORE FLEXIBLE, ISRAELI POLICY BECAME MORE HARD-
LINE. WHEN I ADVERTED TO BELIEF THAT RABIN GOVERNMENT
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HOLDS PROMISE OF MORE FLEXIBLE GOI POLICY, CHATTI AGAIN POINTED TO RABIN'S TENUOUS HOLD ON A MAJORITY. HE DID HOWEVER THINK RABIN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE LESS HARD-LINE THAN MRS. MEIR'S GOI.

9. CHATTI SAID CURRENT MEETING OF ARAB DEFENSE MINISTERS IN CAIRO SHOWED THERE IS AGAIN RISK OF WAR. UNDERLYING QUESTION WAS WHETHER LEBANON ALONE COULD OR COULD NOT PREVENT PALESTINIANS FROM ATTACKING ISRAELIS. THERE WAS A QUESTION OF MORALITY INVOLVED IN REPRISALS, HE SAID. AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL WHO COMMITTED AN ACT OF VIOLENCE COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS MUCH A CRIMINAL IN HIS CONDUCT AS A STATE WHICH DID LIKEWISE. I SAID THAT STATES COULD MAKE MORE OF AN EFFORT TO STOP INDIVIDUAL ACTS. I URGED THAT ARAB GOVERNMENTS WHO HAVE LEVERAGE WITH FEDAYEEN SEEK TO RESTRAIN THEM DURING THIS CRITICAL PERIOD WHILE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED. THIS WOULD ELIMINATE REPRISALS AND CLEAR THE AIR. CHATTI ALLUDED TO IRISH TERRORISM AND DIFFICULTY CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS ARE HAVING IN BRINGING AN END TO TERRORISM THERE. HE SAID AS LONG AS THERE ARE POLITICAL GRIVIANCES, TERRORISM IS HARD TO RESTRAIN.

10. I SAID THERE MUST BE A POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE TO SUCH VIOLENCE, AND THAT THIS WAS SOMETHING WE SEEK IN GENEVA. CHATTI SAID AN IDF INCURSION INTO LEBANON NOW MIGHT BE VERY SERIOUS IN THAT CONTEXT. NO ONE CAN PREDICT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN THEREAFTER. ARAB REPRESENTATIVES AT CAIRO MEETING WOULD HAVE TO WEIGH CAREFULLY ALTERNATIVES. GRANTING OF ARABS MILITARY SUPPORT TO LEBANON AT THIS JUNCTURE RISKS OUTBREAK OF WAR.

11. I ASKED CHATTI WHETHER HIS AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS THOUGHT THAT ASSAD ENJOYS FULL SUPPORT FOR HIS DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. CHATTI REPLIED THAT AMB NOUIRA IS STILL TOO NEW IN DAMASCUS TO PROVIDE BEST INFORMATION. BUT CHATTI HIMSELF HAD BEEN IN DAMASCUS WHILE SECY KISSINGER WAS THERE, AND CONCLUDED THAT ASSAD REALLY HAD A WILL FOR PEACE AND THAT NEARLY EVERYONE SUPPORTED HIM IN
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THIS. ASSAD HAS DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PEOPLE, HE SAID, AND HIS RAPPORT WITH THEM GOES BEYOND THE INFLUENCE OF THE BAATH PARTY. STILL HE REQUIRES A DIFFERENT STYLE THAN SADAT'S, WHICH IS DIRECT, OPEN AND FRANK. ASSAD HAS HIS DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, AND A PUBLIC OPINION BASE MORE RADICAL THAN THAT OF EGYPT, SO HE MUST BE MORE DISCREET, SLOWER TO CHANGE. ONE SHOULD NOT READ

A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SADAT AND ASSAD INTO THE DIFFERENCES IN THEIR STYLES. CHATTI AGREED THAT SADAT HAS GREAT INFLUENCE WITH ASSAD. SADAT'S VISION AND HIS GOALS, HE SAID, ARE THE SAME AS THOSE OF NASSER; BUT SADAT, UNLIKE NASSER, IS CAPABLE OF TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR A MODERATE POLICY LINE AS A MEANS TO THOSE ENDS, AND THIS AUGURS WELL FOR THE FUTURE. BOTH SADAT AND ASSAD HAD GONE ALONG WITH SECY KISSINGER AND PRES NIXON, HE SAID, BECAUSE OF KISSINGER'S TRULY EXTRA-ORDINARY ABILITY AND THE PRESIDENT'S PERSISTENT WILL-POWER. THE NET OUTCOME, HE SAID, WAS UNFORSEEABLE AND HOPEFULLY MAGNIFICENT.

12. ON EURO-ARAB DIALOG, CHATTI SEEMED UNIMPRESSED, ALMOST CYNICAL. WE WILL HAVE TO SEE WHETHER A "COMMISSION"

IS ESTABLISHED, HE SAID. THERE MAY WELL BE NO CONFERENCE OF ARABS AND EUROPEANS FOR ANOTHER YEAR. FOR THE ARABS, "NO ONE'S HOUSE IS ON FIRE." TUNISIAN TALKS WITH THE EEC HAVE TAKEN A VERY LONG TIME, HE SAID, AND SHOWED LITTLE RESULT. IN EURO-ARAB DIALOG "WE DO NOT NEED A BIG MEETING WITH A FANCY DECLARATION AT THE END -- WE NEED HARD WORK TOGETHER, IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL FIELDS."

13. COMMENT: CHATTI AS USUAL DWELT ON SUBJECT OF PALESTINIANS. HOWEVER HE OMITTED REFERENCE TO 1947 PARTITION PLAN, WHICH TUNISIANS CONSTANTLY INVOKE IN PUBLIC AS ONLY POSSIBLE BASIS FOR LASTING PEACE. LIKEWISE, FONMIN, WHO IS PUBLICLY ARDENT SUPPORTER OF EURO-ARAB DIALOG, SEEMS PRIVATELY LESS INTERESTED IN ITS POSSIBLE BENEFITS.

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